generally educated and trained to play such a conscious part, we will not be able to continue in this modern life.

We have individual responsibilities—all of us—whether business men, wage-earners, farmers, or members of the various professions; and we cannot make this modern civilization work unless those individual responsibilities are adequately accepted and discharged. To accept them, however, we must know what they are. Today we do not know. We do not even understand what the social set-up is. Even in these days of the New Deal, in which a great light is beginning to break, the great majority of us are still waiting to see "what the Government will do," or "what capital will do," or "what labor will do," and are unable as yet to see the situation in terms of our own individual responsibilities. This situation must be changed and only education can change it. As to what kind of education, I can see no hope excepting in the kind which has worked so well in the natural sciences—the method of scientific fact-finding.

In our school boards today, can we not at least lay down certain principles for the organization of this necessary education? Granted that no one knows enough to teach the subjects which must be taught, can we not at least agree to take off all restrictions so that teachers and students will be free to learn everything which can be discovered?

I know that my proposal is dangerous. A little knowledge is always dangerous, but that does not constitute a sufficient reason for not acquiring a little knowledge. Chemistry is also dangerous. So is life. The only really safe place seems to be the cemetery; but our civilization, I am convinced, does not want to take that course.

EDWARD A. FILENE

If there is anything in the universe that can't stand discussion, let it crack.—WENDELL PHILLIPS.

THE RADIO INTERVIEW-DIALOG

OF all means of getting ideas across by means of words spoken into a microphone for broadcasting, the dialog-interview is perhaps the most effective if it is well done, and the most disappointing if it is not.

Radio "interviews" in the form of dialog between the person interviewed and the announcer are seldom if ever spontaneous, and are usually prepared in advance by a "continuity-writer" who is neither the announcer nor the person interviewed. The announcer has worries of his own without having to think up questions to ask the scores of prominent citizens or learned authorities and others whom he meets for the first time a few minutes before the program "goes on the air" and perhaps never sees again.

The person interviewed might be equally bewildered if suddenly called upon to provide answers to a volley of questions for which he had prepared no answers. There is, in addition, a risk of mistakes, misunderstandings, inaccurate statements, copyrighted quotations and even of inadvertently libellous remarks which might provoke legal difficulties.

The radio dialog-interview differs radically from the printed interview which appears in the newspapers and magazines. In the printed interview, the interviewer submerges his own personality as rapidly as possible. He may, for the sake of "atmosphere," describe the celebrity's home surroundings, appearance, manner, etc., but as soon as the lion begins to roar he must roar alone. The only trace of the interviewer appears in the quotation marks, put there as often as not so that the lion may disavow some of his roarings if necessary.

The radio dialog-interview is on a different footing. Though the speaker is invisible, the voice is unmistakably the voice of Esau in person. The industrious continuity-writ-

er who ventures to put words into his mouth must therefore exercise extreme care; and of course give the speaker ample opportunity to revise whatever he is to say.

In preparing a radio interview-dialog with a prominent educator such as we frequently do in the New World program under auspices of California Teachers Association, the first step is to secure the necessary material. This can scarcely be done in direct conversation, as the speakers usually live out of town. As a rule, the person interviewed has a written "talk" of his own preceding the interview. Such talks are usually cast in somewhat general terms. In that case, there is ample material for more detailed discussion of a nature which can readily be cast into interview form.

Some of the best results are obtained when both speech and dialog are prepared by the continuity-writer from a mass of "raw material" supplied by the guest-speaker. In making notes or dictating to a secretary speakers are more informal than in preparing a "talk." In the latter case, they almost invariably have an audience in mind, and that in turn an audience of their compeers. The result tends to be an academic, professional talk, admirable for university lecture-hall use, or for use at conventions of teachers, institute meetings, and the like; but of doubtful value as a radio talk addressed to innocent "home-bodies" working at their domestic duties with the radio turned on. The latter will stop listening any time they drop a stitch or smell that pie burning in the oven.

To make a radio program effective for the use of such people, the work must be done so that their attention is constantly being reclaimed by various means: changes from brief talk to music, and back; introduction of new voices; new subjects; new aspects of the topic under discussion.

The contents of the whole program need to be spread over the program as a whole. There must run through the whole program a continuity of thought varied in detail and manner of presentation. Provided the continuity-writer is faithful to his trust, and amplifies without distorting the ideas of the guest-speaker, the program is likely to be more attractive if the whole job is in his hands, including the writing of the "talk" as well as the dialog.

The reason for it is that a psychological problem enters, which is peculiar to radio. The radio listener knows the invisible speaker only by what he says and his manner of saying it. If, then, his talk consists chiefly of learned generalizations, the listener will be apt to think of him as a scholarly academic. Within limits this is a good thing. The dignity of the profession must be maintained—for, say, five minutes out of the thirty! But the speaker must also be presented as a human being: a man or woman who is one with the parents and children with whose lives the teacher is so closely concerned.

For this purpose, the radio-interview is admirable, provided it is prepared with the proper technique. Teachers and college professors as a rule are admirable in the field of exposition. The orderly setting forth of their ideas in dignified terms is their business in life and right well do they do it.

A New World of Fiction

The writing of radio dialog, however, belongs to the realm of fiction and drama. It must be easy and natural, even humorous. The questions should appear sensible, couched in terms bordering on the colloquial. The answers should be written so that the speaker unbends. The academic thesis having been stated, the scholar having defined his terms, he can now afford to be easy and friendly in manner, and plain of speech.

There is nothing more deadly in a radio-interview than the shooting back and forth of prepared questions and answers which do nothing more than elicit facts. Seen on paper such questions and answers seem readable for the excellent reason that they are addressed directly to the reader; the

facts presented are for his eyes to read, his brain to absorb. The insistent demand of his ego to be served is fully satisfied.

On the other hand, listening to a radio speaker and announcer throwing question and answer back and forth in a dry factual way leaves the listener out of reckoning. The most expected of him is that he will please sit quiet and not interrupt. There is no more interest in doing this than there is in waiting patiently in line at the ticket office while the man ahead finds out about trains to Hopetown.

Moreover, both announcer and speaker appear in an unnatural, inhuman light. The announcer is at best a mere Dr. Watson exposing himself to the omniscience of his adored Sherlock Holmes, and Holmes is an academic prig.

To make the dialog interesting, both announcer and speaker need to have character. There should be in their discussion the clash of ideas at least; and perhaps also the clash of personality.

If the announcer asks merely: "Who was Horace Mann?" the speaker is embarked on a flood of biographic detail having little interest. If, however, the question is put in provocative form, the result is very different:

Announcer: Don't you think, Dr. Holmes, that the reputation of Horace Mann is vastly over-rated?

Dr. Holmes would be less than human if he did not engender a little heat in his reply!

But nevertheless, his reply would make the introduction of some biographical detail imperative. And in the ensuing discussion the listener becomes involved, because his judgment is challenged. His sympathies incline from one to the other until the opinionated Watson is properly crushed by the combined logic and passion of Dr. Holmes.

In addition to the clash of ideas, however, there is also possible in a radio dialog the clash of personality. The announcer may represent an angry taxpayer fighting for his lost three R's, and Dr. Holmes then symbolizes the cause of modern education, showing how the modern teacher takes the three R's in his stride.

In either case, the interview takes on some of the characteristics of drama, and is subject to the laws of drama: there must be conflict, rhythm of form, a narrowing down of the issues to a single point for a climactic close in which Saint George effectively triumphs over the Dragon.

The Announcer is Best

The studio presentation of the radio dialog-interview is another important part needing careful prevision by the continuity-writer. In the New World we have experimented at times by having someone other than the announcer do the interviewing: a teacher, a taxpayer, a child, a woman interviewing a man or a man a woman. The result is less satisfactory than having one of the two an announcer, because otherwise both speakers are strangers to the microphone, and therefore under a mutual nervous strain. It is hard at the best of times to read from a script "naturally." It is even harder in a radio studio and harder still if both speakers are strangers to each other and to their environment. Time for rehearsal is usually very limited, and there is little opportunity to get acquainted.

Moreover, questions of delicacy enter. If two argue, one must win. Dr. Watson may be a spirited combatant, but he must miss the clue and fail in his logic. And his failure must be sufficiently obvious for the radio listener to see it the moment that the victorious Dr. Holmes pounces on it.

One hesitates to ask a stranger, possibly well known in the school world, to play Watson and be Public Idiot No. 1.

An experienced announcer not only reads his own lines naturally, but he imbues the person interviewed with a similar confidence. This is especially so if the questions are at all provocative, rousing his opponent to a spirited reply from an emotional need subconsciously felt. As for being Public

Idiot No. 1, the announcer does not mind. He assumes his wonted authority the moment the interview is over; and in any case he's paid for the job!

Even with an announcer, the stranger to the studio is likely to be somewhat formal in manner. It is therefore the task of the continuity-writer so to shape the course of events as to make the formality appropriate. This can be done by making the announcer somewhat colloquial, or even jocular in manner. He can "kid" the professor, and so bring upon himself a kindly but dignified retort. He can "hesitate" for a word, which the "professor" magnanimously supplies. He may venture an opinion of his own in current speech, which the "professor" may quietly restate in the idiom of the educator. All such effects enable the speaker of the day to emerge triumphantly as a kindly sympathetic character whose final word is the verdict of authority.

Arthur S. Garbett

LIBRARY SERVICE AND COSTS

The motto of the American Library Association for many years has been "The best reading for the largest number at the least cost." If a president of this association had the power to change mottoes, I should change this motto right now in your presence to read "The best reading for the largest number at a reasonable cost." Our proverbial taxpayer has a right to expect and to demand and to receive a dollar's worth of service for a dollar's worth of tax money, but he has no right to expect, much less to demand, and he ought to be ashamed to accept the services of a librarian with college and library school education at a salary which in many cases would not equal the minimum wages in a cotton factory or a ten-cent store.—Charles H. Compton, President of the American Library Association.

DR. BENJAMIN M. SMITH'S REPORT ON THE PRUSSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM

(second instalment)

These schools, with others of similar character existing before the law was decreed, were placed under the immediate control of the directors and committees above mentioned. It was made their duty to levy the necessary contributions, with aid from the local magistracy; select and prepare plans of instruction, appoint the teachers, and secure the attendance of all children of a proper age to be at school. These local authorities are not paid. Their meetings must be held once in three months, to which they may invite the teacher. A more extended view of their duties is unnecessary, as it is enough to remark that they are the local executives of the government for carrying into operation every law connected with primary schools, of which they receive official advice by means of the authorities above them. They are immediately responsible to these, and in cases of difficulty with either teachers or people, the appeal may go up to the minister through the intermediate inspector, councillor and provincial board.

It was also provided by the law of 1819, that wherever schools existed before, under the management of persons appointed by their founders, or by them and the parish or church authorities with which they were connected, such might remain under their previous constitution. For all dependent on the royal bounty, the control was reserved to the state.

Every effort to raise the necessary funds for each parish and town school was directed to be made, and "their *claims must not be postponed to any other whatever;*" but if these efforts should not succeed, aid was guaranteed by either the provincial or national governments. Many schools were thus established, which have since exercised an influence on the community so salutary,